What is opera and how does it work? How has this dramatic form developed, and what is its relevance in the modern world? Perfect for music students and opera-goers, this introductory guide addresses these questions and many more, exploring opera as a complete theatrical experience. Organised chronologically, and avoiding technical musical terminology, the book clearly demonstrates how opera reflected and reacted to changes in the world around it. A special feature of the volume is the inclusion of over a hundred illustrative tables. These provide a detailed, easy-to-follow analysis of arias, scenes and acts; visual guides to historical movements; and chronologies relating to genres and individual composers’ works. Overall, the book fosters an understanding of opera as a living form as it encounters and uses material from an ever-expanding repertoire in time, place and culture.

Robert Cannon created the first ever degree in Opera Studies, validated by the University of Manchester for Rose Bruford College. He now works as an independent lecturer, music critic and writer.
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Opera

ROBERT CANNON
For Edmonde

Wer ein holdes Weib errungen
Stimm' in unsern Jubel ein!
Nie wird es zu hoch besungen,
Rettern des Gatten sein.

(Fidelio, act ii Finale)
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